

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

# Living with Wolves

ENCOURAGING COEXISTENCE



Dear Friends,

Whenever people come to know an animal over time, the animal's unique characteristics and tendencies reveal themselves. As we gain insight into their individuality, a heightened sense of wonder and appreciation develops. Beyond our observations of the Sawtooth pack, we have come to know a number of other extraordinary wolves through the wolf watchers in Yellowstone National Park. Wolf Number 253 is one such wolf who served as an ambassador for his species through his remarkable life.

His three-legged gait made him one of Yellowstone's most easily recognizable wolves. By the time wolf spotters identified him as a juvenile, he had already sustained the injury that left him partially crippled. Everyone referred to him as Limpy or Hoppy. Limpy was born in 2000, a young member of the famous Druid Peak Pack. Wolf watchers admired his tenacity on the hunt, helping to take down elk without his front right leg touching the ground.

In 2002, Limpy was struck with wanderlust, making his way 200 miles through Wyoming, all the way to Morgan, Utah. He may have been searching for a female wolf, or perhaps he was gripped simply by the desire to explore. Despite his injured foreleg, Limpy had an indomitable spirit. As one reporter said, "His heart seemed stronger than his legs."

His stint as the first wolf in Utah in 70 years was short-lived. Ironically, one of his good legs found its way into a coyote trap. U.S. Fish and Wildlife officials collected and released him at the northern edge of Grand Teton National Park.

Limpy crossed the territories of several hostile wolf packs to return to his old home and birth pack. Back in Northern Yellowstone, he settled into the rank of beta wolf. Together, he and the famous alpha pair, 21 and 42, became known as the Druids' "Big Three."

There's no exact count, but over his lifetime, Limpy must have covered well over a thousand miles. Even as he entered his eighth year, he was still given to wander. In the end, his spirit of exploration proved fatal.

In 2008, Limpy left his family and the protection of Yellowstone once more, and he headed south into Sublette County, Wyoming, where stores sell T-shirts depicting a wolf in crosshairs with the slogan "Smoke a Pack a Day."

For his entire life, Limpy had been a stalwart deer and elk hunter. No matter how deep into cattle country he roamed, he never attacked livestock. From a ranching standpoint, Limpy was a model wolf, but someone shot him just the same.



Opponents of wolf recovery stoke fears over wolves' insatiable hunger for livestock. The truth is, far fewer livestock animals die as a result of wolf predation than from storms, injury or disease. But statistics don't seem to matter to those who cling to the 19th-century mindset that the only good wolf is a dead wolf.

In Wyoming, people believe in the traditional values of the American West: bravery, independence, perseverance, and self-reliance. Yet we doubt that the hunter who shot Limpy realized that the creature he was about to kill was the embodiment of the very qualities he admired. If he had recognized an adventurous spirit, full of courage and curiosity, would he have pulled the trigger?

Limpy defied the odds for years. The death of a wolf known to many garners particular attention, but there are far more untold stories of the nameless. Therefore, we remain steadfast in our mission to improve the chances for wolves to exist in the remaining wilderness they deserve to call home.

Thank you sincerely for your ongoing support of Living with Wolves.



Jim and Jamie Dutcher, Founders, Living with Wolves

Jim Jamie

Story excerpted from the Dutchers' book,  
*The Wisdom of Wolves*



## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

# DID YOU KNOW? Campaign

We began developing the DID YOU KNOW? campaign in March when it became clear the pandemic was going to change the way we worked for the foreseeable future. In the past, we had purchased newspaper space to inform people of major developments in the heart of wolf country, making crucial information available to effect change. We're taking that effort to new heights with this campaign. We decided that we needed to create a series of public service announcements (PSAs) intended to both captivate and inform.

Many people simply do not know about the issues and ongoing persecution of wolves. Once they learn how wolves are managed, based largely on special interests and misinformation, they are often surprised and dismayed. The DID YOU KNOW? campaign is intended to broaden the reader's understanding of the multifaceted aspects of wolves and wolf recovery.

Each PSA begins with the familiar question: DID YOU KNOW? Then a compelling statement introduces the topic and leads the reader to important talking points about that subject. The PSA is intended to spark an interest in delving deeper. Each topic is supported by a detailed blog on the Living with Wolves website. The blogs elaborate on the high-level information explored in the PSA, dealing with what are often complicated topics. Additional links within the blogs place a wealth of resources at the readers' fingertips.

## DID YOU KNOW? Wolves rarely pose a threat to people.



**Contrary to popular belief, wolves pose very little danger to people, especially in North America. They typically fear people and avoid them.**

**Over the past 120 years, there have been only two cases where wild wolves reportedly killed a person in North America.**

**In the 25 years since wolves were reintroduced to the American West, not one wolf from this recovering population has attacked a human being.**

**LEARN MORE on our blog at:**

**LivingWithWolves.org**  
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## DID YOU KNOW? Wolves don't hunt like bears and mountain lions.



Wolves lack the brute force and size of a bear, and the stealth and gripping claws of a mountain lion. The strength of wolves is their pack. They work together as a well-orchestrated team.

Mountain lions will ambush large prey, while bears quickly overpower them. Both are solitary hunters, relying on explosive, short bursts of energy. In contrast, wolves have great stamina and get the herd to run.

In the chase, each wolf has a specific role. Together, the pack works as one, driving the herd to expose the weaker animals. By selecting the vulnerable, wolves keep herds healthy and strong.

**LEARN MORE on our blog at:**

**LivingWithWolves.org**  
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## DID YOU KNOW? Gray wolves aren't always gray.



A gray wolf's coat can be many shades of gray, brown, rusty red, white or black. Black wolves are found almost exclusively in North America.

Around 7,000 years ago, dogs accompanied humans migrating from Asia. Early dogs bred with wolves in the Yukon, introducing a gene for black fur.

In Idaho, black wolves are common. Around half the wolves living in Yellowstone are black, while black wolves are much less common in the Great Lakes region.

**LEARN MORE on our blog at:**

**LivingWithWolves.org**  
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## DID YOU KNOW? Wolf traps capture more than just wolves.



Records show that at least 47% of the time, Idaho wolf trappers trap something other than a wolf. These traps kill or maim indiscriminately.

Some non-target animals frequently killed by trappers include dogs, cats, deer, eagles, lynx, wolverine, otter, cougars, fisher, marten, geese, porcupines, elk and more.

In Idaho, the majority of these unintended victims die in the traps, including endangered species and pets. Others die from their injuries after release.

**LEARN MORE on our blog at:**

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## DID YOU KNOW? There are ways to protect livestock without killing wolves.



Producers of beef and lamb graze their livestock on the open range of national forests and other public land where wolves and other carnivores live.

The best way to prevent wolves and other predators from attacking livestock has always been with regular human presence like shepherds and range riders.

Livestock guardian dogs along with the use of tools like electrified fladry (pictured above), pulsating lights, and noise-makers help to deter predators.

**LEARN MORE on our blog at:**

**LivingWithWolves.org**  
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## DID YOU KNOW? Wolves only have one litter of pups annually.



Whatever the size of a wolf pack, typically only the two leaders breed, yielding a single litter in the spring.

Averaging 4-6 pups in a litter, 40-60% of pups die in their first year. Pups like these (pictured above) would be 8-12 weeks old in late June.

The entire pack helps raise the new family members. Some years a pack will have no pups at all, and rarely a second female may have pups.

**LEARN MORE on our blog at:**

**LivingWithWolves.org**  
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## DO YOU KNOW about Living with Wolves and what we do?



Based in Ketchum, Idaho, we are a national nonprofit organization working to combat widespread misinformation about wolves, and promote the benefits this misunderstood animal brings to the natural world.

The intimate knowledge gained living with a pack of wolves, and our partnership with National Geographic uniquely positions us to inform you and to fight the unjust persecution of wolves.

Working with prominent biologists to reveal the latest research, we share the truth about wolves through our books, films, presentations, exhibits and website. This is our 12th Public Service Announcement in an ongoing series.

**LEARN MORE on our blog at:**

**LivingWithWolves.org**  
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The DID YOU KNOW? campaign educates people about wolf behavior and biology, while shining a light on the war on wolves, the public hazard and cruelty of trapping, and the myths often perpetuated by those who oppose wolf recovery.



*The information we are publishing in the DID YOU KNOW? campaign is needed now more than ever, as wolves may face nationwide delisting.*

### DID YOU KNOW?

Despite near-record elk numbers, Fish & Game wants fewer wolves.



At year-end 2019, Fish & Game estimated there were 1,000 wolves in Idaho. Now, Idaho has adopted policies to drive that number much lower.

Idaho is also home to about 20,000 bears and 3,000 mountain lions, 120,000 elk and 500,000 deer. There is certainly room for at least 1,000 wolves.

Often resembling game farming more than nature, Idaho's wildlife management is shaped by the interests of livestock production, hunting and trapping.

LEARN MORE on our blog at:

LivingWithWolves.org

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### DID YOU KNOW?

Idaho is expanding animal trapping, while the world pulls back.



Because traps and snares are cruel, inhumane, indiscriminate, and dangerous, much of the world is leaving animal trapping in the past, but Idaho is encouraging more.

Changes since 2012: The number of wolves a trapper may kill has increased from 5 to 30. The portion of Idaho open to wolf trapping has increased from less than 25% to nearly 100% now.

In other parts of the U.S. and around the world, new rules restrict or ban trapping. More than 100 countries have banned steel-jaw traps, including all of the European Union.


LEARN MORE on our blog at:

LivingWithWolves.org

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### DID YOU KNOW?

Wolves actually benefit trout.



Wolves keep elk on the move, preventing them from over-browsing streamside cottonwood saplings and willows. These plants fortify stream banks and prevent erosion, keeping the water deep, shaded and cool.

Willows and cottonwoods provide food for beavers and the materials they need to build dams. Beaver ponds replenish the water table and regulate surges of silty seasonal runoff, keeping the water clear.

Trout are sight-feeders and rely on clear, cool and deep water to thrive. Streams studded with beaver ponds and lined with willows and cottonwoods provide ideal trout habitat.

LEARN MORE on our blog at:

LivingWithWolves.org

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### DID YOU KNOW?

Elk need wolves as much as wolves need elk.



After a historic extermination in the early 20th century, wolves are recovering in the West. For millennia, they have coexisted with their prey, keeping them strong and healthy.

When a top carnivore, such as the wolf, is removed from the ecosystem, prey populations can explode, leading to destructive changes with far-reaching ecological impacts.

Wolves were restored to Yellowstone in the mid-1990's. Since then, elk populations returned to a healthy level, plants and animals rebounded, and the wolf population has stabilized.

LEARN MORE on our blog at:

LivingWithWolves.org

ENCOURAGING COEXISTENCE

Educational outreach is a cornerstone of the Living with Wolves mission. We promote coexistence by dispelling misinformation. The DID YOU KNOW? series is creating an extensive body of knowledge that can be accessed and distributed easily across a variety of platforms. Designed for print and online media, our initial print campaign ran in Idaho, where wolf

policies are particularly aggressive. We intend to continue an online campaign that will allow us to extend beyond Idaho and our current social media audience.

As we make inroads in shifting public perception, wolf management decisions continue to threaten wolf recovery. The Idaho Department of

Fish & Game (IDFG) continues to ratchet up the pressure on Idaho's wolves.

Expanded hunting and trapping throughout the state is meeting IDFG's objective of dramatically reducing Idaho's recovering wolf population. Idaho also uses taxpayer dollars to fund a board whose sole

purpose is killing wolves. From these three sources, a staggering 573 wolves were killed in a 12-month period.

Representing 35-50% of Idaho's wolf population, that number includes adult wolves, as well as pups. This is not scientifically sound management aimed at maintaining a healthy

population. It is an effort to reduce the number of wolves to a fraction of what it is today in order to serve the special interests of livestock producers and hunters.

The combination of aggressive policy decisions and misinformation about wolves perpetuates their mistreatment. The information we are publishing in

the DID YOU KNOW? campaign is needed now more than ever, as wolves may face nationwide delisting. Protecting wolves is not just about wolves. It's about protecting biodiversity. And it's also about respecting and preserving wildlife and wild places that are becoming increasingly rare.



## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

# The Living with Wolves Photographic Exhibit



## The Wolf

Wolves have always stirred the human imagination. For some, they are creatures of nightmare – their mere existence triggering irrational fear and even hatred. For others, wolves hold a special place, capturing hearts and minds as inspiring symbols of all things wild.

This *Living with Wolves* / *National Geographic* exhibit offers you a rare glimpse inside the lives of wolves. *Living with Wolves* is a national non-profit organization dedicated to educating the public about wolves.

Living with Wolves



In partnership with National Geographic, we produced the Living with Wolves exhibit. Stunning photographs coupled with descriptive information panels both engage and educate. Today, there are three installations of this exhibit in different parts of the U.S., presenting a fascinating look into the social structure of a wolf pack.

The first became a permanent exhibit at the Detroit Zoo in 2014. The second exhibit has been traveling Colorado for several years as that state is now the first to approach the topic of wolf reintroduction in a general election. The third exhibit is here in Idaho, where it is our hope to establish a permanent exhibit space in the heart of wolf country.



### NATIONAL LOCATIONS:

Senate Office Rotunda - Washington, D.C.  
Field Museum - Chicago, IL  
Detroit Zoo - Detroit, MI  
Kneeland Gallery - Ketchum, ID

### COLORADO:

Aspen Airport  
Southern Ute Museum - Ignacio  
Museum of Boulder  
InfoZone News Museum - Pueblo  
Cheyenne Mountain Zoo - Colorado Springs  
Western Colorado University - Gunnison  
Steamboat Creates - Steamboat Springs



Young visitors engaging with the interpretive captions beneath exhibit photos.



Jim Dutcher explaining the role of wolves in ecosystems to school kids at the Kneeland Gallery in Ketchum, Idaho.



# WOLF NEWS 2020

By the time you receive this report, the future of wolves in **Colorado** will have been decided through the vote on **Proposition 114** to reintroduce wolves by Dec. 31, 2023. Despite the reintroduction of wolves to the northern Rockies, wolves have been unable to re-establish a population in Colorado. Over the decades, a handful of wolves have managed to reach Colorado, including a small pack currently residing in northwest Colorado. But these periodic infusions have been too insignificant to give rise to a stable population.

In late August, the federal government announced its intention to **remove endangered species protections** for gray wolves across most of the country by the end of 2020. Excluded from the proposal is the critically endangered Mexican wolf of New Mexico and Arizona. The wolves living in the states of the Northern Rockies had federal protections stripped several years ago. This new plan will affect all remaining protected populations of wolves. The wolves of the Western Great Lakes will likely be most impacted by this decision in the near term because of intense pressure, especially in Wisconsin, to quickly open wolf hunting seasons.

With no wolves yet established on the Lower Peninsula, the wolves of **Michigan's Upper Peninsula** have been recovering since they first returned 32 years ago. Now stable and healthy, the population has remained between 600-700 wolves for the past decade. In the last five years, conflicts with livestock have also been consistently low. As of mid-August 2020, out of about 50,000 head of cattle, wolves killed only two. Without wolf hunting or trapping seasons, the state's wolf population is leveling off and the wolves are almost entirely pursuing their native prey. This illustrates that left alone, wolf populations will self-regulate and contrary to a common theory held by state game agencies, hunting is not a necessary tool to manage wolves. Additionally, when wolf packs are not hunted

and kept whole, conflicts with livestock are almost nonexistent. But if the federal government strips federal protections and hunting commences, this stability demonstrated by Michigan's wolves will likely disappear.

We have been using Zoom as an **educational outreach** tool to connect with kids around the country. Of particular note were 120 students in **Miami, Florida**, who were able to learn about wolves firsthand with Jim and Jamie in a virtual classroom.



Jaime Dutcher participating in a virtual discussion.

On August 13, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) killed the final two members of the Wedge Pack. In 2019, **Washington** had an estimated population of 145 wolves and 1,200,000 cattle. Since 2012, the state has killed 34 wolves for conflicts with livestock, 29 of which were killed for the same controversial cattle operation. Recognizing the recurring problem, Governor Jay Inslee directed the WDFW commission to draft new rules and policies **prioritizing non-lethal** wolf management to be in place before the next grazing season.

**Idaho's war on wolves** reached new lows as the state once again changed its rules to greatly increase the number of wolves killed. As of early 2020, hunting season on wolves is now 11-12 months of the year and a single person can kill up to 30 wolves. As a result, hunters are now shooting pups that are just weeks old. Wolf pups are also now being killed on behalf of Idaho's Wolf Control Board, a program largely funded by Idaho taxpayer dollars. Between

35-50% of Idaho's wolves have been killed in the past year.

**OR-7** was the first wolf to return to **California** after his kind had been eradicated in the 1920s. Researchers began following his movements in 2011 when he was fitted with a GPS collar in northeast **Oregon**. His 1,000-mile meandering journey led him to California only months after he left his birth pack. Eventually he returned to Oregon, where he found a mate and the two established the first pack in western Oregon since 1947. He was last seen in October 2019, leading state wildlife officials to think the roughly 11-year old wolf has died.

**OR-54** was one of OR-7's daughters. She too was tracked in an epic journey from **Oregon** to **California**. In search of a mate or another pack, she crisscrossed northern California, returned to Oregon a few times, even dipping into Nevada, covering more than 8,700 miles in just a few years. She was found dead on February 5, 2020 in Shasta County, California. Details of her death were not shared with the public and an investigation is still ongoing.

As a young wolf, **Takaya**, the island wolf, swam to a small island off the shore of Victoria, **British Columbia** in 2012. As suddenly as he arrived, on January 25, 2020 he swam back to Victoria where he was darted, immobilized and relocated out of the city by conservation officers. Believed to be nearly 11 years old, he survived another two months until a hunter shot him.

The population estimate for **Mexican wolves** has grown from 131 in 2018 to 163 in 2019. To mitigate the potential for inbreeding and bolster genetic viability, the Mexican Wolf Recovery Program is collaborating with the **Arizona** and **New Mexico** Departments of Game and Fish in a cross-fostering program. In spring of 2020, 20 captive-born pups less than two weeks old were introduced into

dens where wolf mothers were already raising their own litters.

The last wild population of **red wolves** in the world is on the brink of extinction. Recovery efforts in **North Carolina** began in 1987. From 2002-2014, more than 100 wolves inhabited the recovery area. Now only nine red wolves are known to remain in the wild. While the USFWS has committed to writing a new management plan, their actions have been slow in coming, with no new plan thus far.

This spring, eight new pups were born into **California's** only known family of wolves. The **Lassen Pack's** fourth litter in four years is a welcome addition to California's estimated population of only 20 wolves.

January 2020 marked the **25th anniversary** of the reintroduction of gray wolves to **Yellowstone National Park** and central **Idaho**. Their descendants expanded throughout the region under federal protection as an endangered species. Under pressure from agricultural and hunting interests, their status was fought over as protections were stripped and reinstated multiple times. Despite the often draconian wolf management policies across the West, thus far wolves have managed to persevere. In Yellowstone, where wolves enjoy greater protection, they continue to reward science with a vast and growing body of knowledge. The role of wolves in revitalizing and stabilizing Yellowstone's ecosystem has been meticulously recorded. An important new wave of research looking into their social nature is in its infancy.



Garrikk Dutcher, Program and Research Director



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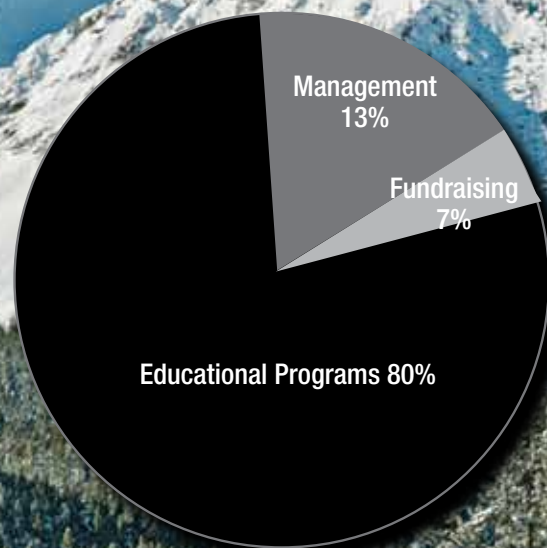
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**OUR MISSION:** Living with Wolves is a 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to engaging the public worldwide in education, outreach and research to promote truth and understanding about wolves, while encouraging coexistence and inspiring people to take action to protect them.

Photo credits - Jim and Jamie Dutcher,  
Christina Carlson, Matt Moyer, Carey Molter  
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## HOW YOUR CONTRIBUTION WORKS FOR WOLVES

### 2019 Living with Wolves Expense Distribution



# Living with Wolves

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